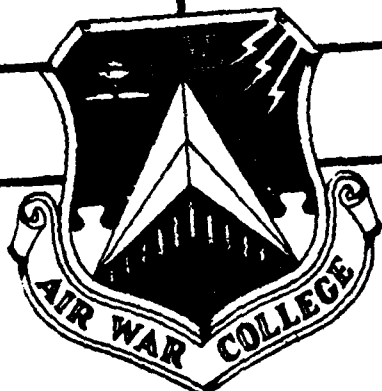


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A PREDICTION OF LEADERSHIP POTENTIAL FOR OFFICERS
IN THE 1967-1969 YEAR GROUPS

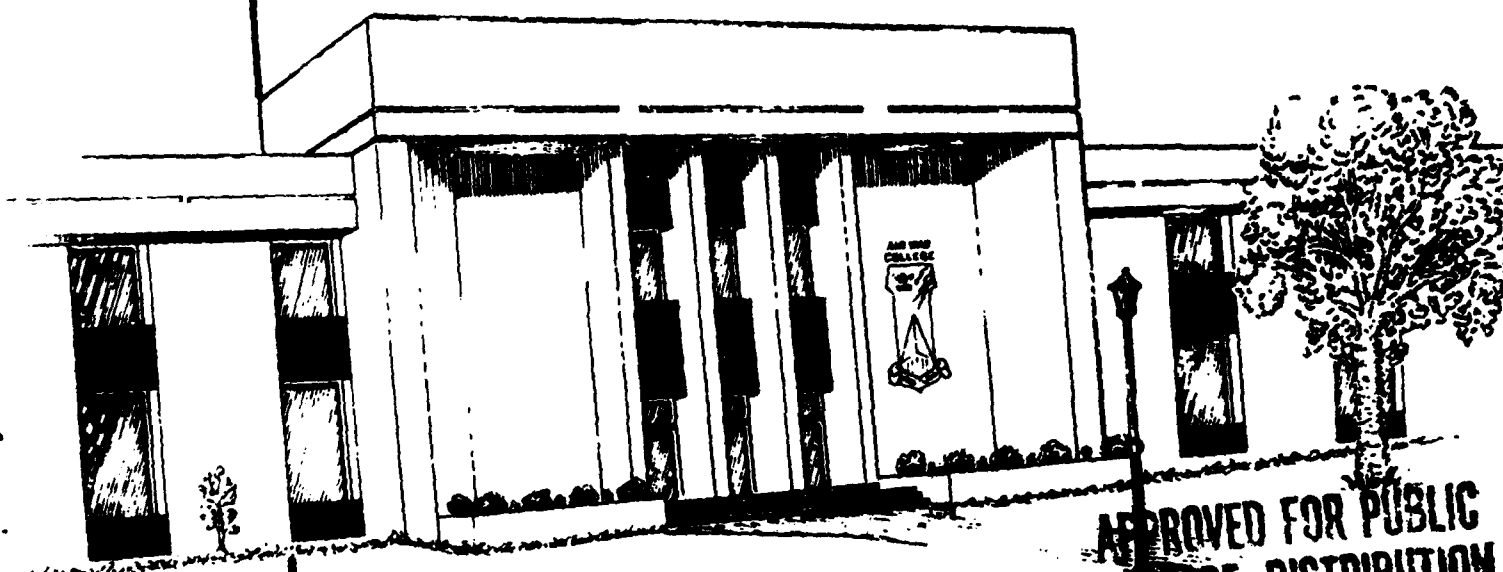
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AIR UNIVERSITY
UNITED STATES AIR FORCE
MAXWELL AIR FORCE BASE, ALABAMA

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A PREDICTION OF LEADERSHIP POTENTIAL FOR OFFICERS
IN THE 1967-1969 YEAR GROUPS

by

Henry E. Laakman Jr.
Colonel, USAF

A DEFENSE ANALYTICAL STUDY SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY
IN
FULFILLMENT OF THE CURRICULUM
REQUIREMENT

Advisor: Colonel Richard A. Steeves

MAXWELL AIR FORCE BASE, ALABAMA

May 1989

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

TITLE: A Prediction of Leadership Potential for Officers
in the 1967-1969 Year Groups

AUTHOR: Henry E. Laakman Jr. Colonel, USAF

The study of leadership has been described by three "Universalist Approaches;" the Leader Behavior, Personality Trait, and the Great Man. This paper barrows from each of these three approaches to analyze the leadership potential of Air Force officers in the 1967-1969 year groups. The Leader Behavior approach is used to analyze the major situations which have influenced the leadership potential of the study group. The Personality Trait approach is used to compare the groups leadership potential against one set of common leadership qualities. Finally, the Great Man approach is used to actually predict leadership potential for both peacetime and wartime situations. (S)



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BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Colonel Henry E. Laakman Jr. is a Command Pilot with over 3600 hours flying time. He served with the 14th Special Operations Wing in the Republic of Vietnam, where he flew 162 combat missions. He holds the Distinguished Flying Cross and eight Air Medals. He earned a M.S. degree from the Air Force Institute of Technology and is a graduate of the Defense Systems Management College. Colonel Laakman is a graduate of the Air War College, class of 1989.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

"Men alone, or machines alone, do not spell success: how men use machines in the combat environment, and the spirit of leadership that guides that use, spell victory or defeat."

(1:2-4)

This statement from the Basic Aerospace Doctrine of the United States Air Force emphasizes the importance of leadership in the combat environment. Will the future senior leadership of the Air Force be capable of providing the spirited leadership necessary to ensure victory? Have the policies, procedures, and events of the past 20 years prepared those on the doorstep of senior leadership to assume the reins of upper level command and provide the necessary leadership for victory? This paper will attempt to predict the leadership potential of the next generation of senior Air Force officers.

Leadership Defined

The focus of this paper is leadership, not management. Therefore, an understanding of the difference between

leadership and management is required. A simplistic adage which was widely taught years ago states that you lead people and manage things. Fortunately, we are more sophisticated in our thinking today, but none the less, the military and the Air Force have been widely criticized for "too much management, and too little leadership." (2:21) Effective management requires leadership, but management and leadership are not the same.

Management has three distinct characteristics. First, management implies a relationship between the manager and the managed, which is derived from an organizational structure. Second, management derives "formal authority" from its position in the organizational structure. Third, and perhaps most importantly, managers are accountable for the job performance of those who are managed, as well as for their own job performance. (3:370)

Leadership has three different characteristics. First, leadership can happen anywhere. It can occur on the ball field, in the cockpit, or in a formal organization. It can also occur in a mob, which has no organizational structure whatsoever. Second, leadership does not automatically come with a position of formal authority. In fact, the leadership in an

organization can come from anyone, whether he is in a position of formal authority or not. Third, a leader is not accountable for the performance of a follower or followers in the same way in which a manager is responsible for those he manages.(3:371)

People comply with the wishes of management because of the system of rewards and punishments established by the formal organization. On the other hand, people follow leaders voluntarily for reasons entirely personal to the follower. The key word is "voluntarily". Perhaps Harry Truman had the best definition of leadership, which he said, is "the ability to get other people to do what they don't want to do, and like it."(4:58)

The ideal situation obviously occurs when a manager in a position of formal authority is also a true leader. In this situation, a manager's leadership is the difference between truly effective and ineffective organizations, the difference between mission success and mission failure. Air Force commanders are obviously "managers" of their squadrons, wings, etc. No military organization is so well organized that it can describe what everyone must do on every occasion. The unknown, flexibility, the fog and friction of war all require leadership to insure success. Management

alone cannot do the job. Furthermore, an organization requires leadership to perform over and above what is normally to be expected. Superior performance can only come from the effects of leadership.(3:371)

Levels of Leadership

Leadership can occur anywhere in an organization; at the lowest level all the way to the highest level. For the purpose of this paper, senior leadership is defined as those positions requiring the assignment of an Air Force general officer. Therefore, this paper will only look at those policies, procedures, and events which affected those Air Force officers entering the service between 1967-1969, and discuss how those factors have impacted the ability of this group of officers to become the future senior leaders of tomorrow's Air Force.

Methodology

Background The study of leadership has been described by three "universalist approaches." (3:372) These approaches are known as the Leader Behavior approach, The Personality Trait approach, and finally the Great Man approach. Each seems to have merit, yet none fully explains the difficult subject of leadership. A brief

description of each approach is necessary before the overall methodology of this paper is explained.

Leader Behavior The emphasis of this approach is what the leader does; not on who he is, or what he is. This situational approach to leadership study involves the influences of the leader, followers, and the specific situation with which they are involved. This approach takes leadership out of a vacuum, and puts it into a specific situation, where the requirements of leadership vary with each new situation.

Personality Trait This leadership approach assumes that there are specific personality characteristics which are the essence of leadership. The emphasis of this study is on what the leader is. This study of leadership attempts to define a universal set of characteristics which will assure leadership success. Characteristics such as vision, courage, integrity, charisma, intelligence, health, and confidence have been suggested. (3:374)

Great Man In this approach, the emphasis is on the person. This study looks at who the person is and why he is that way. Theoretically, by studying the characteristics, behavior, and personalities of great leaders, one can learn about the essence of leadership itself. Furthermore, this study assumes that if one

emulates these great leaders, one can also be a great leader. (3:373)

Defense Analytical Study Approach This paper will borrow from each leadership approach in order to predict the leadership potential of a specific group of Air Force officers. The analysis will be conducted using the three universalist approaches to leadership study. The Leader Behavior approach will analyze the major situations which have influenced this group of Air Force officers. The Personality Trait approach will be used to further analyze the leadership potential against one set of criteria for leadership. Finally, the Great Man approach will be used to actually forecast the leadership potential.

The officers studied in this paper are in the 1967-1969 year groups; i.e., those officers who were commissioned during the years of 1967-1969. These officers were chosen as the study group because they now have approximately 20 years of service, and have attained the rank of Colonel or Colonel select. This group will provide the senior Air Force leadership beginning in the mid 1990's and beyond. This group has been developed and shaped under the same policies, procedures, and events during their 20 years of service.

Chapter II will use the Leader Behavior approach to set the foundation for this leadership analysis. Six major situations will be described in the context of the Leader Behavior model, which emphasizes the influence of the leader, followers, and the situation in the study of leadership. The situations discussed are the Vietnam War, The post-Vietnam War Air Force, the economic influence of the 1970's, the controlled Officer Effectiveness Report (OER) and promotion system, the pilot exodus, and the Air Force management ethic. These situations are by no means all inclusive. They do however represent major situations involving senior Air Force officers which have influenced the majority of the study group. The actions and decisions by the senior Air Force officers as a result of these situations, and the reactions by the followers, yield great insight into the leadership potential of those followers.

Chapter III will then use the Personality Trait approach as an additional aid in predicting the leadership potential of the study group. VADM William P. Lawrence's model of leadership will be used.(22) He describes followership, responsibility seeking, people sense, discipline, intelligence, stamina, moral courage, and patriotism as qualities common to all good leaders. These leadership qualities will be discussed

within the context of the situations described in Chapter II. From this, more can be learned about the leadership potential of the officers studied in this paper, and a prediction can then be made.

Finally, Chapter IV will borrow from the Great Man approach to leadership study. Rather than a reflective look back on who a particular great man was, this chapter will be a predictive look forward at the potential for a "Great Man" to emerge from the 1967-1969 year groups. This chapter will actually concentrate on the group as a whole, rather than on what a single individual member of the group might become. It is a generalized prediction of the potential for a "Great Man" to emerge from the group.

Summary

This study will make a generalized prediction of leadership potential for the Air Force officers in the 1967-1969 year groups. This prediction will be made after examining six major events which have affected the vast majority of the officers in the study group. These leadership situations are examined in the context of the Leader Behavior approach to leadership study. Next, these leadership situations are examined in the light of the Personality Trait approach to leadership

study by comparing the actions of leaders and the reaction of the followers to the common leadership qualities described by VADM Lawrence. Finally, the Great Man approach to leadership will be used as a guide to make the prediction of leadership potential for the study group officers.

CHAPTER II

THE LEADER BEHAVIOR APPROACH

Introduction

The Leader Behavior model of leadership studies the interaction or influence of the leader, the followers, and the situation. This chapter will examine six major issues which have influenced the majority of all officers in the 1967-1969 year group. These issues are the Vietnam War, the post-Vietnam War Air Force, the economic inflation of the mid 1970's, the controlled OER, the pilot exodus, and the emphasis on Air Force management. In this chapter, emphasis will be placed on the situation, and the reactions of the followers, who in these situations are the members of the study group.

Analysis

Background In May 1946, nine months after V-J Day, there were an unprecedented 233,452 American births. By the year's end, an all-time U.S. record of 3.4 million babies had been born. (4:60) This group has been variously called the Baby Boomers, the Spock generation, the Now generation, and the Me generation.

The study group thus was fathered by the servicemen who were returning victoriously from WWII and would be expected to have a strong patriotic foundation.

Approximately 21 years following V-J Day, the first members of the study group began entering the Air Force. All those in the study group would enter the service voluntarily. Due to the numerous deferments available to draft age men in the 1967-1969 time frame, those with a college education found it easiest to obtain a draft deferment. During this same period competition was very keen to receive an Air Force commission, regardless of the source of commission. The majority of commissions were made available to those who were pilot or navigator qualified, obviously because of the demand for aircrews in Vietnam. Therefore, the members of the study group were fully aware of the high probability that service in Vietnam would follow graduation from flight school. Most sought this opportunity and welcomed the chance to "Fly and Fight" for their country.

Vietnam The Vietnam experience had a profound effect on most members of this study group. The vast majority of rated officers experienced combat duty at some time prior to the U.S. withdrawal in 1973. This combat duty was the culmination of years of training and

preparation to "Fly and Fight." The professionalism of the Air Force aircrews during the Vietnam War was exceptional. Aircrew discipline was extremely good, both in the air and on the ground. Although aircrews may have disagreed with the Rules of Engagement (ROE), they were obeyed, in my opinion.

Aircrews who served in Vietnam inherently understand joint operations. Air strikes in Vietnam were normally conducted in coordination with Army air, ground, and artillery units, as well as Naval air and artillery, and frequently South Vietnamese air and ground forces. The coordination and communication necessary for successful strikes of this nature is not underestimated by those who were in this environment.

Aircrews from the Vietnam War also understand the true meaning of the fog and friction of war, the necessity for quick and decisive decision-making, and the necessity for risk-taking. Those concepts are inherently understood by those who have actual combat experience, and are more than just concepts to be read in Clausewitz or Douhet. They are a reality.

Post Vietnam The return home for the majority of the Air Force officers was less traumatic than that of the U.S. ground forces. Aircrews returning from Vietnam were proud of their service and confident that they had

won the "Air War" in Vietnam. The American public however, viewed most Vietnam veterans with the same attitude - baby killers and drug addicts. This attitude held by the American public would cause many fine officers to rethink their commitment to the "profession of arms" and the idea of the military as a noble profession. If nothing else, this public attitude, plus the normal sacrifices associated with military service, caused many highly experienced and capable officers to leave the service.

An additional factor in the post-Vietnam War era which has had an impact on the study group is the lack of senior heroes from the Vietnam War. The Air Force heroes of Vietnam were men such as Maj. Merlyn Dethlefsen, Capt. Lance Sijan, or Maj. Bernie Fisher. Many men would serve with great courage and inspiration, and many squadron and wing commanders would serve as leadership models for junior and mid-level officers. However, no one at the senior officer level would emerge as a man of vision who would make a great difference in the course of the war. A general officer has never emerged from this war with the mantle of hero bestowed upon him. The likes of Curtis Lemay and Jimmy Doolittle would not emerge from the Vietnam War. No one would emerge from this long war as a

genuine role model for would-be leaders to look up to or emulate at the senior officer level.

Unfortunately, one of the most publicized generals to emerge from the Vietnam War was Gen. John D. Lavelle. Gen. Lavelle admitted that he authorized illegal bombing raids over North Vietnam from Dec 1971 thru March 1972. A total of 172 missions were flown during this time. Gen. Lavelle also admitted responsibility for his officers falsifying reports on the raids. (6:3) The irony is that, not only did the Vietnam War produce no heroes at the general officer level, it produced numerous examples of poor senior officer leadership.

For those who remained on active duty following the Vietnam War, several additional factors would ultimately impact on our leadership's potential. The tremendous increase in the price of JP-4 fuel in 1973-74 had a significant impact on the careers of many Air Force officers. Flying time was drastically reduced, and assignments into nonflying positions would become the way of life. In one year alone, the price of JP-4 went from 10.6 cents a gallon to 35.4 cents, (7:32) and ultimately the price would go above \$1.00. The resulting changes to the rated force caused many rated officers to be assigned into nonrated duties. Headlines such as "1000 More Rated Loose Flight Jobs,"

were common in The Air Force Times. (8:6) For those pilots lucky enough to remain in an active flying position, proficiency was the main concern. Cross training into a new weapon system became virtually impossible, except in times of dire need. The cost of training dictated that once a pilot was trained into a particular weapon system, he would be forced to remain with that system.

Personal Economic Factors 1975-On The rapid rise in the price of oil was quickly followed by the rising cost of housing, and other cost-of-living factors.

Additionally, the baby boomers who set off a school building boom in the 1950's were now flooding the housing market.(9:77) Between 1970 and 1976, the median income of American families and consumer prices both rose about 47 percent. During this same time, the median price of existing homes rose 65 percent from \$23,030 to \$38,100, and new home prices shot up 89 percent to \$44,200.(10:52) This would have a dramatic impact on careers of many officers. Permanent change of station (PCS) moves were sought or avoided for economic reasons alone by many officers. The opportunity to get into, or stay in a particular housing market was often considered at least as important as the career advantages or disadvantages of a particular job. In my opinion, most officers used

every means available to avoid an assignment to the Washington, D.C. area because of the economic hardship involved.

Moving costs became a major problem, especially to those officers who had homes to sell. Unlike the civilian members of the Department of the Air Force, the closing costs for a home sale were not paid to the military members who were required to PCS.

Furthermore, if a home could not be sold in a timely manner, families were often separated for long periods of time. Mothers and children frequently stayed behind to sell the house, while the husband moved on to the new duty location. This type of living situation, along with reduced benefits, or at least the perception of reduced benefits, caused many officers to leave the Air Force. Many other economic factors, such as working wives, private school costs, and college costs would influence many officers to forsake the benefits of career opportunities and the associated substantial economic risks in favor of financial stability and security.

CONTROLLED OER - 1975-1978 The purpose of the controlled Officer Effectiveness Report (OER) was to insure a quality force. "Air Force officials hope that by holding down inflated ratings they will be able to

assess more accurately the quality of the officer force. Presumably, a more realistic picture of officer quality will contribute to better decisions on who stays and who is released, on promotions, and on assignments."(11:3) The controlled OER was implemented in October 1975 for members of the study group. Under the system, all officers of a particular grade were evaluated at the same time each year. Lieutenants were evaluated in February and August, Captains in October, and Majors in December. Under the new OER, all officers were subject to a set of rating quotas; i.e., 22 percent of all officers could be rated in the top block, 28 percent could be rated in the second block, and 50 percent could be rated in the third, fourth, fifth or sixth block.

"A third-block rating is a good competitive evaluation. It is intended to identify the majority of our officers who are solid performers, consistently doing their jobs well, and whose potential makes them deserving of due-course promotion advancement. It will be the rating most frequently given in the Air Force and it is competitive for promotion."(11:3)

This, in fact, did not turn out to be the case. One of the first promotion boards under the revised system demonstrated just how promotable the third-block OER really was. In February 1976, the Lieutenant Colonels board published the board statistics. Of the 1806 new eligibles considered for promotion, 442 had a

third-block rating; 11 were promoted for a 3 percent promotion rate.(12:10) The impact of the controlled OER on unit esprit, cohesion, and morale was almost immediate. The controlled OER had the undesirable effects of divisiveness, envy, selfishness, and self-seeking attitudes. Competition for the top block rating was extremely tough, and the efforts by individuals to achieve the top block rating were frequently not in the best interests of the unit or the Air Force.

The implementation of the controlled OER was highly dependent upon the attitude and motivation of the squadron and wing commanders. Most units would look for "discriminators"; that is, any observable difference which would make one officer stand out above another officer. This would lead to many unfavorable trends which unfortunately still linger in the Air Force today. For example, additional duties became more important than primary duties. The logic was that everyone could fly the mission, but not everyone could be the squadron OER monitor, or teach instrument school. The pursuit of advanced college degrees and PME became obvious discriminators. If one did not have a master's degree and the appropriate level of PME, one was not as qualified as the individual who did have these accomplishments. The promotion boards would give

even greater emphasis to this fact by a high degree of non-selection for those who had not "filled the square" for PME and advanced degrees.

The idea of a "one-mistake" Air Force was fueled during the controlled OER period. Because any mistake would give a commander the "discriminator" he needed, a mistake would often lead to a "3" on the OER. Again, because 50 percent of the rating group were forced to be given a 3, commanders could hardly justify giving someone who made a mistake a higher rating than others who had not made a mistake. This fact would lead to an attitude of playing it safe and taking no risks. Long after the controls were removed from the OER, the impression of a "one mistake" Air Force remains.

One particularly distressing side effect of the new OER was the attitude which developed regarding special duty assignments or assignments which required selective manning. These units or organizations were not exempt from the mandatory quotas, so 50 percent of the outstanding individuals selected for these special units would also receive a "3" on their OERs.

Assignments which were once highly sought after became hard to fill as the attitude of risk avoidance became more prevalent.

Finally, the prejudice which already existed in the Air Force for pilots when compared to navigators became more obvious under the controlled OER. My personal experience during the controlled OER period was that pilots received by far the greatest percentage of top block ratings when compared to navigators and support officers. Throughout the system, inequities existed which violated almost everyone's sense of fairness or justice. Promotion boards disproved the advertised notion that those with a "3" OER could be promoted, especially if the "3" was the last report written before a promotion board.

Fortunately, after three disastrous years under the controlled OER, the system was eliminated. Formal termination of this system would not end many of the undesirable side effects which had resulted under the revised OER. The preoccupation with PME, advanced degrees, the attitude toward risk, additional duties, and the "one-mistake" Air Force would remain even to this day in some degree.

Pilot Exodus 1977-1980 "There are no surprises in the conclusion of an Air Force wide survey of exiting pilots. There is an amazing consistency as far as the pilots' reasons for getting out - lack of security, lack of control over assignments, the OER, and

unresponsive leadership."(10:23) Furthermore, of the 498 pilots leaving the service from 1978 thru early 1979, the majority indicated they were separating because of dissatisfaction with the Air Force, not because opportunities existed to fly for the airlines.

Pilot losses were measured from the sixth to the eleventh year of active service. In September 1976 the loss rate was 49.4 percent, meaning that for 100 pilots entering the sixth year of service, 49 would leave by the end of the eleventh year. In September 1977 the loss rate was 52.1 percent, in September the rate was 60.4 percent, and by March 1979 the rate was 69.8 percent.(14:3)

According to General Bennie Davis, "What concerns me most, is not the loss of a pilot capable of flying a mission, but the far greater loss of an irreplaceable cadre of experienced and potential leadership in middle management. That loss will eventually affect our senior leadership ranks."(15:8) One of the major reasons cited for leaving the service was the perception that leadership lacked concern for the individual. In fact, many held it was the excessive rate of pilot turnover that lead to the demise of the controlled OER.

Pilot Exodus 1983-1988 The Air Force's pilot retention rate has declined every year since 1983. "The pilot cumulative continuation rate for the third quarter of fiscal year 1988 stood at 45 percent, a 33 percentage point decrease from 1983." (16:2) Air Force Chief of Staff, Gen. Larry D. Welch has said "that although record airline hiring is a major factor in the dropping pilot retention rate, studies show that airlines tend to provide a 'golden parachute' for people who are dissatisfied for other reasons." (17:6) Unfortunately many Air Force leaders continue to blame much of the decline on the airline hiring boom.

The reasons why pilots are leaving in 1987-1988 are substantially the same as they were in 1976-1978. Air Force Military Personnel Center administered the pilot retention survey between December 1986 and January 1987. Over 4,200 pilots were randomly selected to participate in the survey. Pilots claim that having little say in future assignments is the top negative factor affecting their decision to get out. Air Force policies and procedures, the promotion system and promotion opportunity, and working conditions were the next three most negative factors listed as reasons for getting out. (18:3)

Management Ethic

Someone, somewhere along the line decided that our military would be better led by managers than by romping stomping Arleioh Burkes. As a result, no longer are America's top military leaders true fighters. The rugged warrior-types who took Saipan and Normandy have been replaced by erudite, urbane corporate generals and admirals who have a minimum of an MBA from one of America's top business schools, know which dessert spoon to use, and are smooth, cool, and management-capable."

(19:113)

That "someone" was Robert McNamara, and his systems management approach to Pentagon leadership has had a profound effect for the past 20 years. Short term assignments and the high mobility of senior Air Force officers contribute to the emphasis on management rather than leadership from the top.

During the Reagan administration, defense spending increased to a level double that of 1975. (20:36) Programs for the MX, B-1, M-1 tank, aircraft carriers and ultimately SDI were started or rejuvenated. A key question during the debate over the defense build-up was the ability of the Department of Defense to manage such a massive expansion, especially in light of a

"controlled decentralization" of important management prerogatives to the individual services. Essentially, each service would be allowed to procure the weapons deemed appropriate to its own strategic objectives. (21:19) Consequently, the individual services became obsessed with the battle of the budget, and virtually every level in the Air Force was aware of the senior leadership preoccupation with the budget and management of the new systems which made up President Reagan's Strategic Modernization Program. Every Air Force command was "input oriented" during this time, meaning that inordinate time and attention was spent developing, justifying, articulating, defending, lobbying, testifying, and revising the budget.

Summary

The six major events just discussed have had an unmistakable impact on the leadership development of the officers who entered active duty during the 1967-1969 time period. Each officer who entered the Air Force during this time brought his own individual personality and capacity for leadership, but the foregoing events have certainly modified, or influenced that capacity to lead the Air Force of the future. The next chapter will assess the influence these situations

have had on the personality and leadership potential of
the future leaders of tomorrow's Air Force.

CHAPTER III

PERSONALITY TRAIT APPROACH

Introduction

The Personality Trait Approach to leadership today is based on the premise that there are certain personality characteristics that are essential for a person to be a good leader. Many have discredited this approach because it does not consider the many differing situations which a leader might be required to face. VADM William P. Lawrence, former Superintendent of the US Naval Academy, stated that "...there was a wide range of personalities among the great military leaders of WWII. Although there is no so-called standard personality or style, I have observed that there are certain qualities that are common to those who are strong leaders." (22:4-61) This chapter will further analyze the leadership potential of the 1967-1969 year groups by contrasting the situations discussed in Chapter II with the eight common qualities of leaders as described by VADM Lawrence.

Analysis

VADM Lawrence listed eight qualities that he considers common to good leaders. These qualities are:

followership, responsibility seekers, people sense, discipline, intelligence, stamina, moral courage, and patriotism. (22:4-61, 62) Each will be discussed in the context of the Personality Trait Approach, and from the influences of the situations discussed in the Leader-Behavior approach.

Be a Good Follower To be a good leader, one must first learn to be a good follower. This concept includes the adage that one should have loyalty up as well as loyalty down. The Vietnam War produced a generation of officers who know how to be good followers. The vast majority of the officers in this group were in some way directly involved in the Vietnam War. As a result, the team work that was involved, the loyalty to seniors, and dedication to the objective was instilled at a very early stage in their careers.

In my opinion, several situations developed following the Vietnam War which eroded this good base of followership. First is the fact that no senior leaders emerged from the Vietnam era as strong examples for followers to emulate. Secondly, the controlled OER period motivated individuals to focus attention on themselves; to show how they stood out from the crowd. As a result, the overall good of the organization, and loyalty down the chain became secondary considerations.

The objective was seen as getting a "1" on the OER; everything else took second priority. As a result, these officers are still good followers, but they will seize every opportunity to highlight their own individual accomplishments. They are not the "selfless" individuals which Gen. Eisenhower looked for when he assigned people to positions of top responsibility. (23:253)

Eagerly Seek Responsibility VADM Lawrence said that most fine leaders eagerly seek responsibility. "They thoroughly enjoy authority, the power that goes with authority, and the ability to get worthwhile things accomplished by exercising that power." (22:4-61)

This concept includes the competitiveness that is associated with seeking responsibility, as well as the risk and accountability that is attributable to fighters who have a strong desire to win. The Vietnam War had a positive influence on this aspect of our future leader's personality. The Vietnam War was seen as an opportunity. The responsibilities of combat were eagerly sought, and the risks were well understood. The men of this generation also fully understood that the desire to win must extend beyond just the combat forces, but must also include the political leadership as well as the population as a whole.

Despite the many negative aspects of the controlled OER, it did have some advantages. As the controlled OER evolved, it became obvious that the people in the positions of greater authority were generally rewarded with the top block OER's. This certainly provided an incentive to seek positions of greater authority. One can argue whether the prospect of a good OER is the appropriate motivation to seek advanced responsibility, but nonetheless, the Controlled OER did enhance the desire for positions of greater responsibilities.

People Sense VADM Lawrence noted that most leaders have good people sense. By that, he meant that leaders are aware of and know how to relate well to others. They must keep attuned to the feeling of their people and take timely actions to maintain good morale and esprit.

The value and art of people sense has not been reinforced by the events of the past 20 years. The pilot exodus and the controlled OER are both examples of issues where leadership was not in touch with the feeling of the people. In the case of the controlled OER, the esteem of the individual was ultimately the reason why the OER was cancelled, but it took three years for the leadership to realize this.

In the case of the pilot exodus, both periods (1977-1980 and 1983-1988) have shown that personnel and assignment policies are the number one cause for pilots leaving the service. The leadership has not yet attempted to deal with that issue, and instead attempts to solve the problem with higher incentive pay.

Finally, the Air Force's preoccupation with management efficiency has had numerous deleterious effects on the personalities of future Air Force leaders. Perhaps it is the excessive time demands that are placed on senior leaders, or perhaps it is the management vs. leadership syndrome, but many of today's senior officers do not take time to know their subordinates, nor do they take time to motivate their subordinates. Motivation is "assumed" and this pattern of behavior is either consciously or unconsciously transmitted to the next generation of senior officers. Admiral James Stockdale said the "the mentality of our military leaders

has become largely that of efficiency-worshipping functionaries. But my experience as a fighter pilot operating from aircraft carriers at sea, observing from first hand the unprecedented battle and intelligence scenes of the Vietnam War, and eight years of prison-camp revelations - impressed me with how such mindsets breed disaster when the unexpected occurs, and when it becomes necessary to steer an institution into uncharted waters."
(24:66)

This mindset of management efficiency, and the attitudes of senior officers toward their subordinates

are threatening aspects of the future leadership potential for the study group members.

Discipline VADM Lawrence observed that most good leaders are highly disciplined. They are people who can establish well-defined goals and channel their resources to achieve these goals. Admiral Lawrence also stated that good leaders have the intellectual discipline needed to analyze complex problems and develop logical, well thought-out decisions.

Once again, the experiences of Vietnam are positive when viewed from the effect on development of a disciplined personality. The combat and combat support experience of Vietnam fostered a disciplined mindset, especially for the aircrews who flew in Vietnam. Aircrew discipline was extremely good in Vietnam, and has been carried forward in the post-Vietnam years.

The controlled OER and pilot exodus should also have a positive effect on the leadership potential of the study group. As members of the group who were affected most by the Controlled OER and pilot exodus, they have first hand experience with the impact of decisions which were not well developed. These decisions were made with short sighted objectives, and should be long remembered as examples of bad decision making.

Intelligence Admiral Lawrence means that most good leaders are able to look at complicated situations and a mass of detail, and quickly perceive the key issues. They then focus their energies on the key issues and get them resolved. He also states that although intelligence is largely an innate quality, it can and should be enhanced. Like so many others who write on the attributes of leadership, he advises that leaders develop a wide base of knowledge and read extensively to benefit from the experiences of others.

The combined experiences of the past twenty years have all contributed to a group of officers that, from an intellectual point of view, "look good on paper." As a group, most all have masters degrees, and have completed three levels of PME. They have done so, however, as a matter of "square filling." My experience over the past 20 years convinces me that because of the emphasis by promotion boards on advanced degrees and PME, most officers have achieved advanced degrees that required little if any intellectual discipline. Because of the job demands placed on an officer's time, as well as the requirements for Temporary Duty (TDY) and family considerations, most officers chose a course of study which placed the least demand on their time and energy. The same holds true for PME. Most officers did the least amount of work

needed to pass the PME courses and were motivated simply to get credit for courses on their personnel record. Few, if any, considered the PME or the advanced degrees as something that would be helpful in making them better officers. The primary consideration was always the necessity to "fill the square" before the next promotion board. The end result is that the subject group is not nearly as intellectual as it would seem from the record. In my opinion, they are not widely read as a group, especially in matters of military history or world geopolitical events.

Stamina Admiral Lawrence has noted that most leaders possess a high degree of stamina, which he defines as the ability to keep themselves going for long periods of time. They seem to be tireless and are able to drive themselves in achieving a high level of productivity. "I learned long ago, particularly in the prisoner of war (POW) experience, that there is a very close relationship between the psychological and physiological. I have found that those people who have very positive mental outlooks, surprisingly, seem to tire less and become sick less than other people."

(22:62)

This particular personality trait is not affected by the major events of the past 20 years. Stamina is

assumed to be an inherent quality that one either does or does not possess. However, the controlled OER and promotion system, as well as the preoccupation with management efficiency, have produced a generation of officers who are used to hard work and long hours.

Moral Courage Admiral Lawrence considers this to be one of the two most important qualities of leadership. He defines moral courage as knowing right from wrong, and possessing a firm set of values as well as the strength to live by those values, regardless of the consequences. Unhappily, several of the major situations discussed in Chapter II have combined to create an atmosphere whereby values are not highly regarded by many Air Force officers. In fact, the lack of values is tolerated in many situations every day.

During my own tour in Vietnam, exaggerated post mission reports were commonplace. Intelligence officers who conducted the post mission debriefing openly encouraged aircrews to exaggerate their assessments of damage and size of enemy concentrations. This type of reporting was perceived by many to be widespread.

During the post-Vietnam War era, the evidence of a low value system within the Air Force continued. In every flying squadron to which I was assigned, the answers to the annual instrument exam could be easily obtained by

any pilot. My personal discussions with pilots from other squadrons led me to believe this was the norm, rather than the exception. Furthermore, it was commonplace for the senior staff members to be given the answers for all closed book and emergency procedure exams which are required annually for all pilots. The same "cooperate and graduate" attitude exists in many PME correspondence and seminar programs. For years the answers for PME tests were available, allowing one to easily complete the courses without even reading the materials.

The OER in general, and specifically the controlled OER are also evidence of the systemic lack of values within the Air Force. Exaggerated statements of officer performance were, and still are, commonplace on the OER. Facts are sometimes overstated just to fill the required space on the OER form. Additionally, fear of a bad OER has kept many officers from speaking out or taking exception to a position contrary to that held by his rater. This demonstrates both the lack of moral courage on the part of many officers, as well as a lack of confidence for those in leadership positions.

The Air Force preoccupation with efficiency has created the greatest systemic problem with values and moral courage. Whether it is unit reports or readiness, or

cost/schedule status reports for new weapon systems, my belief is that Air Force officers tend to report what makes them look good up the chain. Because officers get fired for not meeting established quotas or standards which have been directed or dictated by our efficiency mindset, the predictable result is reporting which lacks true validity.

Patriotism Finally, Admiral Lawrence states that he has never known a fine military leader who did not possess a strong sense of patriotism. He includes the love of country as well as a firm belief in our form of government and our democratic system in his definition of patriotism.

The trend is not good for the study group when patriotism is examined over the years. Vietnam appears to have been the high water mark for patriotism. Patriotic reasons for joining the Air Force as well as the desire to serve in Vietnam were battered in the post war period. The inflation of the 1970's caused many fine officers to leave the service, as the desire for a higher standard of living was more appealing than patriotism.

The same can be said for the controlled OER and the pilot exodus as well. When faced with limited opportunities for advancements, caused by less than

desirable OER's, many officers simply left the service. Grievances within the Air Force as well as the opportunity to fly for the airlines, have caused large numbers to leave the service. Obviously, patriotism has taken second place when compared to economics and other factors for a large group of those who were once part of the year groups under study.

For those who remain, patriotism is still alive but it does not have an overriding influence on personal behavior. Individuals in the study group would never be unpatriotic, but at the same time, they rarely act in ways which demonstrate awareness of a "greater good" for the Air Force, or the country. The greatest motivator for this study group is their own personal gain in terms of promotion or assignment opportunity.

Summary

Former U.S. Naval Academy Superintendent, VADM William P. Lawrence observed and wrote about the common qualities in good leaders. He described eight qualities as common to all good leaders that he had observed: followership, responsibility seekers, people sense, discipline, intelligence, stamina, moral courage, and patriotism. Of these qualities, moral courage and patriotism were considered to be the most important. These qualities were applied in the context

of the Personality Trait Approach to the study of leadership. In effect, these qualities of leadership become the criteria against which the leadership situations described in Chapter II were compared. How have the study group members measured up to these criteria, and have the situations from Chapter II contributed to the development of great leaders for tomorrow's Air Force? The next chapter will address these questions.

CHAPTER IV

THE GREAT MAN APPROACH

Introduction

The Great Man approach to leadership study places emphasis on the person. This analysis of leadership looks at who the person is, and why he is that way. This chapter will use the concept of the Great Man approach to predict the leadership potential of a group of Air Force officers. It is not the intent of this paper to predict the likelihood that one individual might emerge from the population of the 1967-1969 year groups as a great leader. It is, however, the intent to make a prediction of leadership potential which is generalized across the entire group of officers. Both peacetime and wartime leadership will be analyzed.

Analysis

Peacetime Leadership The peacetime leadership potential for the 1967-1969 group can only be described as status quo leadership. The leadership which will emerge will be no better than the recent generations of senior Air Force leaders, but it will be no worse. Therefore, I predict no one will emerge from this group to become a "Great Man". The management ethic which

had dominated Air Force leadership for the past 20 years has produced another generation of effective managers. Charles Moskos and Frank Wood concluded that, "over 70 percent of officers surveyed periodically in the past ten years (n=5000) agree that during their time in the Air Force the prestige of the flying function has declined while that of management has increased." (25:31) This management emphasis is a reality of life in the political atmosphere of today's shrinking defense budgets and increased demands placed on military leadership from congressional watchdog agencies.

In some respect, the peacetime leadership potential for the next generation of Air Force senior officers is greater than previous generations. The 1967-1969 year groups have had greater opportunities for specialized training than did previous generations. Many of the officers in the study group have had the opportunity to attend schools such as the Air Force Institute of Technology and the Defense Systems Management College, which have been tailored to the specific needs of these officers.

The benefits of additional education are offset however by the general lack of moral courage. The combined effects of the controlled OER and perceptions of senior

officers themselves have led to a generation of officers who lack the courage to live by a set of values, regardless of the consequences. Honesty and integrity are often compromised in order to "get ahead." This lack of honesty and integrity has seriously undermined the credibility of our senior managers in the eyes of Congress. For example, it would be political suicide for a senior Air Force officer to recommend cancellation of a major defense program because the contractor was unable to meet the specific cost, schedule, technical or support requirements. Instead, the norm is to emphasize the accomplishments, minimize or disregard the problems, and always make the program appear to be exceptionally well managed.

The next generation of peacetime leaders will treat people the same way in which they have been treated themselves. Motivation will be the missing ingredient in their leadership style. Today, a typical solution to problems for senior officers is to fire someone, and bring in someone else who can fix the problem. Although this may be effective, it is not leadership, and it has had an overall detrimental impact on the attitude and confidence that people have in the senior leadership of the Air Force.

The future senior officers of the Air Force will be hard working responsibility seekers. They will not shy away from problems because of the work involved, or the difficulty of the task. Intellectually, the next generation of senior officers is not as well prepared to solve the tough problems as they could have been. Few officers have prepared themselves for senior leadership by studying history, lessons learned from previous wars, or the political/economic aspects of world tension areas.

Finally, the probability that a "Great Man" will emerge to become a great peacetime leader is statistically reduced. Unfortunately, many of the most talented or capable officers have left the service, leaving a less talented pool from which to select the next generation of senior peacetime leaders. From my own personal acquaintances in college Reserve Officer Training Corps and Undergraduate Pilot Training, every single officer who I thought had general officer potential is now either dead or out of the Air Force. The Vietnam War, peacetime aircraft accidents, pilot exodus, and economic factors have taken their toll on the classmates I had picked to become general officers.

Wartime Leadership In the event of another war involving U.S. forces, numerous factors indicate that a

"Great Man" will emerge as a great combat leader. First, and perhaps foremost, is patriotism. This 1967-1969 year group is perhaps the last group to have such a strong patriotic foundation. As the first members of the baby boom generation, the patriotic foundations for this group of officers began shortly after the end of WWII. This same generation of officers were all volunteers during the unpopular Vietnam War, when deferments were readily available to those with a college education. This same group of officers have stayed in the Air Force, even though the post-Vietnam War era, the controlled OER, the economic inflation of the 1970's, the two periods of pilot exodus, and an environment dominated by management ethics drove many contemporaries out of the Air Force. Strangely enough, those same factors which have driven many talented people away from the Air Force, and thus weakened the peacetime Air Force leadership potential, have in fact weeded the less patriotic members of the Air Force out of the service. Thus, in time of war, the leadership which will emerge from this group will do so for the right reasons - love of country, and the opportunity to serve the nation.

Moral courage is another factor which will contribute to the rise of a "Great Man" during the next war. This has not been an obvious trait for this group of Air

Force officers, and many of the previously cited examples indicate a lack of true moral courage during peacetime. In time of war however, when life and death is at stake, I believe this group of officers will lead with the convictions of their values. The peacetime pressure of striving to get ahead will give way to the realities of war. Furthermore, the stamina, discipline, and eagerness to seek responsibility which has characterized this group all along will play an important role in wartime as well.

Only one of the common leadership qualities discussed by VADM Lawrence causes me to be concerned about the wartime leadership potential of the study group, and that is intelligence. As previously mentioned, numerous officers have left the Air Force, and thus a smaller pool exists from which to select the next generation of senior Air Force officers. My own personal opinion is that many of the most capable and intelligent officers have left the service, leaving a less talented group from which to select the next generation of Air Force senior officers. I believe the remaining group of officers are of above average intelligence, but are not as good as they look on paper. Fortunately, VADM Lawrence considers patriotism and moral courage to be of greater importance than intelligence.

Finally, this group of officers will be the last, for the foreseeable future, to have actual combat experience. Successive generations will not have this distinct advantage of experiencing the physical and mental pressures associated with real combat. Given the probable short duration of the next conflict, we cannot afford the luxury of "on the job training" for senior combat leaders. Therefore, the combat experience which this group already possesses is a distinct advantage for the combat leadership potential of this group.

SUMMARY

I have predicted that no one will emerge from the 1967-1969 year groups to become a "Great Man" leader in peacetime. At best, we can expect status quo leadership. Factors which influence this analysis are dominated by the Leader Behavior approach to leadership study. The management ethic which has dominated the military for the past 20 years is a significant contributor to this analysis. The controlled OER, pilot exodus, and economic factors have all contributed to the fact that many of the most capable officers in this group have left the service with a smaller, less capable group from which to select the next generation of senior officers. Certain aspects of the Personality

Trait approach to leadership study apply to the peacetime prediction as well. Moral courage and people sense are two qualities which detract from the peacetime leadership potential.

Unlike the peacetime prediction, I expect that a "Great Man" can emerge from the study group in the event of another war involving United States forces. Factors which influence this analysis are dominated by the Personality Trait approach to leadership study.

Patriotism, in particular, is a major contributor to this analysis. Other factors which influence this prediction are stamina, discipline, and eagerness to seek responsibility, which have all been demonstrated by this study group. The combat experience which was discussed in the Leader Behavior analysis is also a significant contributor to the prediction of a "Great Man" leader. Intelligence is the only factor which is considered to be a major detractor to "Great Man" leadership potential.

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